DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 350 497 CG 024 549

AUTHOR Hernandez, Barbara K.
TITLE Ideas for Action: Helping Girls and Young Women in Your Community.
INSTITUTION Northwest Regional Educational Lab., Portland, Oreg.
SPONS AGENCY Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission, Salem.
PUB DATE Jul 92
CONTRACT 523/3/90/1201
NOTE 79p.; A product of the Oregon Girls and Young Women's Project.
PUB TYPE Reports - General (140)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; Advocacy; *Children; *Community Organizations; *Females; Fund Raising; *Helping Relationship; Organizational Communication; Public Relations; Public Support; Social Action; Social Behavior; Volunteers; *Youth Problems

ABSTRACT

This idea book is a resource to help individuals focus their good will and energy on helping girls and young women in their communities. After a brief introduction to each of seven advocacy strategies, ideas for action are listed under each. The first advocacy strategy focuses on organizing your community for action. Ideas for action include giving youth a visible and integral role and convening a small group to address a specific issue. The second advocacy strategy focuses on recruiting and using volunteers and recommends advertising a volunteer referral number and developing a resource directory. The third advocacy strategy discusses influencing public policy. Ideas for action in this category include informing key policymakers about what you are doing and obtaining support for a resolution from government officials. The fourth advocacy strategy focuses on getting your message out. Ideas for action include identifying key audiences and writing letters to editors. The fifth advocacy strategy discusses building self-esteem. Ideas for action focus on caring and support, high expectations, and opportunities for participation for youth. The sixth chapter focuses on tapping potential supporters and includes ideas for action for men, young people, celebrities, and service organizations. The seventh chapter focuses on raising funds and provides ideas for action in contacting foundations, corporations and organizations, and individuals. Marketing tips are also offered. (ABL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED350492
CG024549

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Helping Girls and Young Women in Your Community

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Jerry D. Kirkpatrick

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Oregon Girls and Young Women's Project

Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IDEAS FOR ACTION:

Helping Girls and Young Women in Your Community

Prepared by the Oregon Girls and Young Women's Project
Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory • July 1992

Barbara K. Hernandez

Ideas for Action is a compendium of effective advocacy strategies, rather than a resource directory. Although it does contain selected resources for implementing some of the suggested strategies, inclusion here does not imply official endorsement of the program or product by the Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission or the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL).

This idea book was produced by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, a private nonprofit corporation. The work contained here was developed pursuant to Contract No. 523/3/90/1201 with the Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission, and no official endorsement by the commission should be inferred.

NWREL Publication Staff

Andrea Baker, Coordinator
Lee Caudell, Editor
Mary Girouard, Desktop Publishing

Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission
530 Center Street, N.E., Suite 300
Salem, Oregon 97310
(503) 373-1283

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500
Portland, Oregon 97204
(503) 275-9500 • (800) 547-6339

Acknowledgments

We wish to thank the following individuals who contributed suggestions on both the form and the content of *Ideas for Action*. We appreciate their time and expertise to help make the idea book a useful resource for practitioners.

Lynn Ervins, specialist, Multnomah County Youth Programs

Rita Flynn, staff, Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission (OCCYSC)

Alice Galloway, executive director, Oregon Children's Foundation

Gabriele Huycke, chair, Linn County Children and Youth Services Commission

Claudia Johnson, supervisor, The Boys and Girls Aid Society of Oregon

Kathie Kennedy, member, OCCYSC (Ashland)

Tiah Sanderson, member, Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (Wasco)

Kim Sherwood, chair, Multnomah County Children and Youth Services Commission

Beverly Stein, legislator, Oregon Legislature

Gina Wood, staff, OCCYSC

In developing the idea book, we contacted the local children's commissions and programs providing services to girls to solicit ideas for the booklet. We would like to thank the following people for responding to our request for information:

Linda George, Roseburg High School

Ellie Goward, Salem-Keizer Schools

Toni Hardy, Juvenile Department, Lakeview

Katie Howe, Marion County Health Department

Candy Hughes, Children's Advocacy and Treatment Center, Grants Pass

Lyndall Hurse, Center for Human Development, LaGrande

Jody Ahlstedt, Open Door Clinic, Roseburg

Loris Fenner, New Beginnings, Klamath Falls

Cindin Carroll-Riddle, Phoenix Schools, Idleyd Park

Sharon Liddycoat, Adult and Family Services, Lakeview

Bob Pickel, Klamath County Youth Services Commission

Sherri Stortz, Santiam Girl Scout Council, Salem

Donna Trudeau, Community Action Team, St. Helens

A young child was walking down a beach on which thousands of starfish had been washed ashore. As she walked along, she would pick up a starfish every once in a while and throw it back into the ocean. As she was doing this, an older man came along. They started walking and talking. The man chided the child, saying, "Why waste your efforts? There are too many starfish to throw them all back into the ocean. You aren't even going to make a dent in the thousands that are washed ashore." As she threw another starfish back into the ocean, she turned to the man and said, "You're right, but it sure made a difference to that one!"

—Anonymous

Preface

The Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission (OCCYSC) advocates on behalf of Oregon's children and youth. In partnership with local commissions in Oregon's 36 counties, the state commission provides leadership in:

- Developing and recommending state policy and standards for services in the areas of early childhood, school dropout prevention, and juvenile issues
- Facilitating comprehensive planning at the local and state levels for a continuum of services to children from conception to 18 years of age
- Fostering the coordination of services to children and families at state and local levels

Local commissions plan for community action and programs to achieve a continuum of services for children, youth, and families in the areas of prevention, early intervention, and treatment. They identify, analyze, and prioritize community needs and develop a variety of solutions to address them. Needs assessments conducted by each county examine the adequacy of programs and services and identify gaps in services.

The plight of many girls and young women in Oregon is receiving increased attention from the state commission. One of its projects, the Oregon Girls' Advocacy Project, resulted from an initial meeting of social service providers concerned about the lack of coordinated services for girls. During the first four months of 1990, the project conducted county-by-county assessments to gather information about the needs and problems facing girls and young women and current services available to them.

The assessments showed a surprising uniformity of opinion about the areas in which girls and young women are underserved. At least 80 percent of the state's 36 counties identified the following four areas as critical: alcohol and drug abuse, teen pregnancy, physical and sexual abuse, and homelessness.

To promote awareness of the problems and needs of girls and young women in Oregon, the commission contracted with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory to develop and disseminate a collection of interrelated communications and media products. In addition to this booklet, *Ideas for Action*, the Oregon Girls and Young Women's Project is producing:

- Public service announcements
- Four tabloid newspapers
- An Action Kit including a model speech, fact sheets, and overhead transparencies
- A poster
- An informational brochure

The result of the project will be increased public awareness of and advocacy for meeting the priority needs of girls and young women who are involved, or at risk of becoming involved, in the juvenile justice, child welfare, or welfare systems.

A list of the 36 county commissions is available from the OCCYSC, 530 Center Street, N.E., Suite 300, Salem, Oregon 97310, (503) 373-1283.

Contents

Page

Introduction 1

Strategies

1. Organizing Your Community for Action 3
2. Recruiting and Using Volunteers 7
3. Influencing Public Policy 11
4. Getting Your Message Out 13
5. Building Self-Esteem 19
6. Tapping Potential Supporters 25
7. Raising Funds 29

Marketing Tips 33

Introduction

Purpose of Ideas for Action

Ideas for Action is a resource to help you focus your good will and energy on helping girls and young women in your community. Many face multiple problems and bleak futures related to physical and sexual abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, homelessness, and teen pregnancy. This idea book is for those who want to do more but don't quite know where to start.

We offer numerous activities, many requiring little preparation and money, that you can easily do in your community. Others will require more effort and commitment. We hope that you will carry out in your local area one or two (or more) of the ideas presented here. Of course, we couldn't list or envision all the possibilities for action, and in a book this size, we're not able to give step-by-step procedures for carrying out all the suggestions. But we hope that at least some of our ideas will spark your imagination.

The ultimate purpose of *Ideas for Action* is to ensure better lives for the girls and young women in our state who now live with despair and desperation. What we do today to improve their lives helps ensure a brighter future for them and their families and a more stable foundation for our communities.

Audience

It is our hope that *Ideas for Action* will help county children and youth services commissions take a leadership role in advocating for girls and young women. The idea book also should be useful to service providers, program volunteers, and other concerned community members.

Organization

This idea book has a simple organization. After a brief introduction to each of seven advocacy strategies, we list *ideas for action* under each. These advocacy strategies are:

1. Organizing Your Community for Action
2. Recruiting and Using Volunteers
3. Influencing Public Policy
4. Getting Your Message Out
5. Building Self-Esteem
6. Tapping Potential Supporters
7. Raising Funds for Your Programs

In some instances we provide contact information for a program or county commission that may be able to help others who are interested in a specific idea.

This idea book is for those who want to do more but don't quite know where to start.

STRATEGY 1:

Organizing Your Community for Action

If you already have begun to organize your community, the following can serve as a review and perhaps give you some additional pointers. If you haven't, we will give you some concrete ideas on how to start.

When we talk about organizing your community for action, we mean enabling your community to solve its problems. We mean community members sharing the responsibility for what happens in their community.

People investigating community leadership[1] have found that communities good at solving their problems are ones that are good at reaching everyone about pressing issues. They don't leave this to chance. They help all residents know and learn about community issues. They also provide a place where this learning can happen.

Strong communities hold conversations about how to improve the lives of real people. They always consider how individuals are affected by what happens in their community.

Most of us live in diverse communities. Differences exist in income, education, race, interests, and points of view, to name a few. Healthy communities are able to embrace this diversity. They negotiate conflicts. With limited resources and often conflicting values, they make hard choices.

Healthy communities make decisions based on sound judgments, not opinions. They study choices, reflect on consequences, and unite diverse points of view to find a common ground that will lead to a sound decision. The majority doesn't rule. One opinion is not "sold" to everyone. People reason together to find the best solution to a problem.

Healthy communities have strong leaders who know how to empower people to make sound decisions. They are people who are able to put into words the ideals and goals of their communities and move groups of people to carry them out in concrete ways. Especially important, leaders come from all walks of life, not just government or business.

Healthy communities have strong leaders who know how to empower people to make sound decisions.

[1]The following is based on ideas presented in "Why Some Communities Can Solve Their Problems." David Mathews. *Community Education Journal*, Fall 1990. David Mathews is president of the Kettering Foundation, former president of the University of Alabama and former secretary of U.S. Health, Education and Welfare Department.

There are no great things, just small things done with great love.

—Mother Teresa

IDEAS FOR ACTION

■ **Participate in a formal community organizing process.** The Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission has developed a comprehensive program to help you organize your community for action. Called CAP (Community Action Planning), the program teaches community members a process for examining the problems their youth now face and for developing concrete action to ensure positive youth development in the future.

The book, *Preparing Your Community: A Guide to Community Action Planning in Oregon,* by Kathe Schaaf and Teresa Hogue, shows you how to carry out a successful CAP experience. Briefly, the five essential steps are:

1. Form a local steering committee of 10 to 20 people, including youth, who are trained to provide local leadership and coordination
2. Prepare the community through public information sessions, data collection, and arrangements for future training
3. Train youth who will be involved in the CAP process
4. Provide CAP planning workshop
5. Follow up on action plans developed in the CAP workshop, including forming task forces to carry out planned actions

Of course, this all takes time. Problems didn't happen overnight, and they won't disappear overnight. CAP will work if your community members:

- Have a vision
- Have a strong commitment to change
- Find committed people
- Plan clear strategies
- Obtain volunteers
- Make creative use of people, facilities, and materials
- Generate enthusiasm for the plan

Let's take a moment to talk about a vision. What does that really mean? To have a vision you must first know what needs to be done. This requires you to find out about the problems in your community by asking the right people the right questions. Possible questions are:

- What are the problems of girls and young women in your community? Neighborhood? School? Family?
- Are services adequate to address the identified problems?
- Which problems are priorities at this time?
- What can we do to alleviate the priority problems?

You can base your vision statement on the answers to these questions.

To receive training and technical assistance from the CAP program, call or write Teresa Hogue, Positive Youth Development Coor-

dinator, Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission, 530 Center Street, N.E., Suite 300, Salem, Oregon 97310, 373-1283; or 2600 N.W. College Way, Bend, Oregon 97701, 388-8361.

■ **Give youth a visible and integral role.** Harness their energy and creativity in your organizing efforts. If they are involved, they will have ownership in the process, the programs, and the community.

■ **Link with other agencies or groups.** You can maximize your efforts by working through a network, coalition, or partnership. It will enable you to:

- Avoid duplicating services
- Improve the quality of services available
- Share what works and what doesn't
- Share resources and thus reduce competition for limited resources
- Broaden the number of your supporters
- Provide increased opportunities for leadership within the coalition

For your issue, find out whether a national, state, or local coalition already exists. If one does exist, make certain local programs know about it. If one doesn't, consider heading a coalition-building initiative in your local area or within the state.

A first step would be to identify all agencies that might possibly benefit from belonging to the coalition or network. Next, make personal contact with several of the agencies to inquire whether they are interested in forming a network. A third step would be to set up a meeting time and invite representatives from all the agencies on your initial list. Together, the different agencies can formulate how the network would function and the purposes it would serve.

In Marion County, for example, three coalitions have formed to deal with the issue of teen pregnancy: Teen Parent Consortium, North Marion County Teen Task Force, and South Marion County Teen Parent Coalition. For information on the process, contact Ellie Goward, 399-3098.

■ **Convene a small group to address a specific issue.** Maybe you want to start small by calling a group of people together to do something about a problem or issue. If so, these are the simple basics that you need to follow:

1. Determine a convenient meeting time and place
2. Invite people who support what you are trying to do
3. Provide refreshments to create a relaxed atmosphere
4. Ask someone to facilitate the meeting (to make sure the group stays on task)
5. Know what you want to talk about (have a tentative plan) before the meeting

There is no heavier burden than an unfulfilled potential.

—Charles Schulz

If you think you are too small to be effective, you've never been in bed with a mosquito.

—Betty Reese

6. Allow people to revise your agenda at the start of the meeting
7. Together create a vision of what the group wants to accomplish
8. Translate your vision into a set of tasks
9. Assign responsibilities for each task
10. Set a budget
11. Select someone to coordinate the project to make sure people complete tasks on time
12. Report the results of your efforts to the appropriate audiences

The Union County Children and Youth Services Commission (963-1001) formed a subcommittee to address the specific issue of teen pregnancy. The committee is developing strategies to reduce the county's teen pregnancy rate.

■ **Get ideas from people who have done it.** If you need ideas about how to get started, below are three examples of major community organizing efforts.

- The Klamath County Youth Services Commission (883-5117) recently began organizing for action. Called "Planning for Solutions," the effort begins by convening community forums to "coordinate community resources, communicate ideas and information, and develop strategies and solutions." These community forums will address 10 local issues and determine where the community is now, where it wants to go, and how it will get there. One of the community forums will address the problem of teen pregnancy.
- Josephine County mobilized its community to establish the Children's Advocacy and Treatment Center (474-KIDS) which serves as a refuge and resource for all abused children in the county. This is a non-profit organization of concerned citizens that puts the child as the first priority.
- In Douglas County, the Open Door Clinic (672-9596) is developing and seeking funds for a children's outreach program to provide acute, non-emergency health care to low-income youth and children, specifically youth who are homeless or from violent or abusive homes.

STRATEGY 2:

Recruiting and Using Volunteers

In 1989, nearly 20 percent of the U.S. population—38 million people 16 years old and over—did unpaid volunteer work. How can you tap this priceless resource?

What do you do when someone calls and says, "I want to do something for girls, but I don't know what. How can I help?" You want to be able to direct the caller to programs or people who need help, but to do this, you need to know two things: (1) what programs or individuals in your community need, and (2) what the caller has to offer.

Here are a few tips about recruiting volunteers:

- Determine how you want to use volunteers
- Estimate how long each task will take
- Determine which kind of people you would like to recruit and how you might reach them. Examples are:
  - Former clients
  - Children
  - Seniors
  - Homemakers
  - Business people
  - College students
  - High school students
  - Differently abled
  - Philanthropists
- Approach potential volunteers with specific tasks they can do (nothing will turn off volunteers faster than a vague or uncertain request for assistance)
- Set a realistic time frame for completing the task

Make your volunteers feel that they are important members of your team, not just someone to do what no one else wants to tackle. Orient them to your organization and stay in contact as their work progresses. Recognize their contributions with certificates of appreciation, celebration luncheons or dinners, or profiles in your publications.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

■ **Advertise a volunteer referral number.** People can call this number to find out how they can help. Staff this number with volunteers.

Establish a "system" to handle calls from potential volunteers. It doesn't have to be elaborate, just effective. First, determine how you might use volunteers. Then, call programs in your area to find out their needs. Make a list of these program needs and keep

To direct people to programs or people who need help, you need to know (1) what programs or individuals in your community need, and (2) what the volunteer has to offer.

The greatest tragedy is indifference.

—Red Cross slogan

it by the telephone. When someone calls saying, "How can I help?" you will have a ready answer.

You may want to establish a more formal system. If so, form a board from local service clubs to oversee a volunteer clearinghouse.

In general, volunteers can help in the following ways:

- Make presentations to civic, client or community groups
- Represent your priority issue on a radio talk show
- Write articles for newsletters and press releases
- Call programs in the area to find out what volunteer help they need
- Produce a resource directory for your local area
- Recruit other volunteers
- Manage a volunteer program
- Help organize a community forum
- Have direct contact with girls (for example, cut hair, teach a cooking class, coach a sport, teach keyboard skills, bring flowers or games, repair or maintain equipment)
- Write legislators, newspaper editors, etc. to raise awareness of issues
- Serve on planning committees
- Help raise funds
- Staff a hotline

The list is endless. Your task is to list all the responsibilities and activities related to your advocacy initiative and then decide which can be carried out by volunteers.

■ **Look into computer software that helps you track volunteers or other people important to your organization.** If you have computer capability, such software could save you a lot of time and effort. One example is Servus which comes in Apple, Macintosh, and IBM compatible versions. For information, contact MicroAssist, Inc., 2951 Kincaid Road, Billings, Montana 59101, (800)735-3457.

■ **Develop a resource directory.** Start with a list of programs in your community that serve girls and young women. This list of programs, which may only be a few pages to begin with, may grow into a rich and reproducible directory. (Keep this long-term goal in mind when you begin.) Contact programs to find out what they need, for example, money, services, materials, or people. Ask them to be specific. This will enable you to make a good match between volunteers and programs.

Before you start calling programs, you may want to develop an "interview" sheet so that you will be able to receive similar information from each program. Helpful information includes:

- Brief statement of project's purpose and services
- Contact person, address, and phone

- Immediate needs
- Ongoing needs

Hold a breakfast or lunch to introduce your directory to community leaders and other interested people.

Not sure how to get started? Check with some other local commissions that have done resource directories. Two programs that have produced such booklets are:

> *Investing in Our Youth: Marion County's Future,* Marion County Board of Commissioners, Courthouse, Salem, Oregon 97301-3670, 588-5212
>
> *Meeting the Needs of Young Children (Great Start): Investment Options,* Multnomah County Youth Program Office, 426 S. W. Stark, Sixth Floor, Portland, Oregon 97204, 248-3565

You may say, "This sounds like a great idea but I don't have time to do it." If so, you could have a volunteer or volunteers collect the information. Just be sure that you provide guidance so that you get the information you need and want. Remember that you don't have to have a comprehensive list immediately. Just let your list grow gradually.

■ **Find out what your callers have to offer.** Some people are most comfortable giving money. Some may have furniture to donate. Many will want to give their time (for example, acting as a mentor to a young woman, filling in at the reception desk, or helping prepare meals). Others can provide a service (for example, driving a van or fixing the plumbing). Develop an interview form to use when people call asking what they can do. At the least, ask for the following kinds of information:

- Name, address, phone
- Skills or interests they have (give examples if necessary)
- Special population or program that interests them
- Limitations (for example, are they unwilling to do presentations, make phone calls, or transport people?)
- References

Try to end a call with at least referring the caller to a program or agency, giving them a suggestion about what they can do, or promising to send them your resource handout or directory.

Always encourage callers to become directly involved with girls. Personal contact may be critical in changing a young person's life for the better. One caring individual can have a great influence.

■ **Form a support group for volunteers.** It could meet monthly to discuss volunteer activities, address problem areas, etc.

■ **Recognize volunteers.** Use certificates of appreciation or a ceremony during National Volunteer Week. (This usually occurs in

Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.

—Helen Keller

If we do not change our direction, we are likely to end up where we are headed.

—Chinese proverb

April. Check with your local library reference service to find out the exact date.)

■ **Start or support a speaker's bureau.** Recruit and identify people for a speaker's bureau on a regular basis.

■ **Need more information on volunteers?**

Contact:

Voluntary Action Center
123 Oakway Center
Eugene, Oregon 97401-5666
683-8364

Volunteer Bureau of Greater Portland
718 W. Burnside, Room 404
Portland, Oregon 97209
222-1355

The Points of Light Foundation
736 Jackson Place
Washington, D.C. 20503
(202)408-5162

These programs have information that will help you set up a volunteer referral service.

STRATEGY 3:

Influencing Public Policy

Contacting a legislator, agency director, or corporate president is intimidating to many people. But it doesn't need to be. Look at legislators, human resource directors, and CEOs as potential supporters of your advocacy efforts for girls and young women. Remember many are parents of girls and have, or should have, a strong commitment to your issues. Your job is to find out who already supports you and who just needs a little nudging. Then tailor your approach (see Strategy 4, "Getting Your Message Out") to fit your audience.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

■ **Inform key policymakers about what you are doing.** Write letters. Call them on the phone and chat about issues and needs. Invite them to your activities. This will expand your support base and give you potential allies who may be willing to help you out when you need them.

■ **Find out which policymakers already support your issues.** Consider:

- Legislators
- State and local government officials
- State governmental agencies
- Corporate managers

Investigate what they are involved in; perhaps you can form a partnership. Where might your efforts dovetail with theirs? Always be prepared to collaborate. It saves time, effort, and especially money.

■ **Sponsor gender/multicultural training.** Include local, county and state policymakers. Such a training activity would be a good opportunity for a collaborative project of several agencies or programs. Resources for more information in this area are the sex equity specialist at the Oregon Department of Education (378-8585) and the Intercultural Communication Institute in Portland (297-4622).

■ **Investigate what influential public and private organizations are doing.** Again, find out how you can piggyback on their efforts. Some of these organizations are:

- American Association of Retired People
- American Association of University Women
- The Boys and Girls Aid Society of Oregon
- Campfire Girls
- Future Farmers of America

Look at legislators, human resource directors, and CEOs as potential supporters.

The stakes...are too high for government to be a spectator sport.

—Barbara Jordan

- Future Homemakers of America
- Girls Scouts
- Links, Inc.
- Oregon Children's Foundation
- The Private Industry Council
- Salvation Army
- Soroptomists International
- Volunteers of America
- Women's Foundation of Oregon
- Women's Summit

■ **Link your advocacy efforts with the Oregon benchmarks.** In 1991 the Legislature adopted the Oregon Progress Board's *Oregon Benchmarks: Setting Measurable Standards for Progress*. The report contains nearly 160 measurable benchmarks that set concrete goals for Oregon's prosperity and livability over the next 20 years. Three "critical" benchmarks, identified as "urgent problems in which we must see progress in the next five years," are directly related to girls and young women:

- *Teen Pregnancy*. Pregnancy rate per 1,000 females ages 10-17 will drop from 19.5 in 1990 to 9.8 in 1995.
- *Drug-Free Babies*. Percentage of infants whose mothers did not use illicit drugs during pregnancy will increase from 89 percent in 1990 to 95 percent in 1995.
- *Drug-Free Teens*. Percentage of 11th-grade students free of involvement with illicit drugs in the previous month will increase from 68.2 percent in 1990 to 85 percent in 1995.

Addressing the benchmarks will help you get the attention of policymakers who know we all need to work together for Oregon's future.

■ **Obtain a resolution from a government official.** Ask your city, county, or state government to support a resolution to designate a day, week, or month for girls' issues.[2] Individuals or organizations can request proclamations that are given out regularly for almost any purpose. The steps to follow are:

1. Call your mayor's, commissioner's, legislator's, or governor's office and ask for the person who handles proclamations. Be sure to obtain her or his title and the correct spelling of her or his name.
2. Mail sample proclamation and letter to the contact person and the government official.
3. Call in a few days to verify that they received your letter and to find out when the proclamation will be issued.
4. Try to plan a media event around the proclamation.
5. Send a thank-you letter.

[2]Adapted from *101 Wonderful Ways to Celebrate Women's History*. Bonnie Eisenberg and Mary Ruthsdotter. Santa Rosa, CA: National Women's History Project, 1986.

STRATEGY 4:

Getting Your Message Out

To communicate effectively means you need to know your goal.[3] Do you want help in addressing a problem? Or do you want to make more people aware of what the problem really is? If you want help with a problem, you will need to reach people who (1) believe a problem exists, (2) think they may be able to do something about it, or (3) have a personal reason for seeing the problem solved or alleviated. You should focus your efforts on these people. If, on the other hand, you want to increase awareness, then you will want to reach a wider audience. With limited funds, don't try to reach everyone with every message.

Depending on your message, audience, and budget, carefully consider the diverse ways you can reach your audience:

- Newsletters
- News/press releases
- Press kits
- Feature stories with photographs
- Public service announcements
- Overhead transparencies
- Annual reports
- Brochures and booklets
- Memorandums
- Fact sheets
- Short, pithy messages on bumper stickers, buttons, milk cartons, grocery bags, buses...
- Concerts, conferences, film series
- Street banners

Send your message to any or all of the places below:

- Local television and radio news or talk shows
- Local cable companies
- Local newspapers
- Trade and business publications
- Local service clubs
- Public libraries
- Resource centers
- City/county parks
- Youth recreation agencies and centers
- Community centers
- Housing projects

Focus your efforts on people who: (1) believe a problem exists, (2) may be able to do something about it, and (3) have a personal reason for seeing the problem solved or alleviated.

[3]Many ideas for this section come from *The Unauthorized Communications Handbook for AOD [Alcohol and Other Drugs] Coordinators*. Joe Schneider, et al. Portland, Oregon: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1991.

When we can't dream any longer we die.

—Emma Goldman

- Social service agencies
- Health care clinics
- Laundromats
- Movie theaters
- Shelters
- Religious organizations
- Parent/teacher groups
- School superintendents
- Student newspapers
- School district newsletters
- Local companies
- Your advisory committee members

Effective media pieces need to follow certain guidelines. We offer the following to help you get the most out of your efforts:

1. Know exactly what you want to say. Tailor each message to a specific audience and have an idea of what you want to happen as a result. For each message you write, no matter what the length, ask yourself:
   - What is my message?
   - Whom do I want to reach?
   - What do I want to happen?
2. Think about the questions your readers would ask you and answer them. State your message without jargon or fancy words and in a strong, positive manner. Make sure you have the right tone and the right words! Proof everything carefully!

IDEAS FOR ACTION

■ **Identify your key audiences and concentrate your efforts on them.** Use personal means—telephone calls, personal letters, flyers, newsletters—to reach them.

■ **Always celebrate your successes publicly.** Call a press conference when you have something positive to report.

■ **Send relevant information to the media.** Use the fact sheets from the Oregon Girls and Young Women's Advocacy Project's Action Kit. The Action Kit is available from local children and youth service commissions throughout the state. It contains a model speech, fact sheets, and overhead transparencies dealing with the issues of teenage pregnancy, sexual and physical abuse, homelessness, and alcohol and drug abuse.

■ **Publish a calendar of relevant events.** Focus on activities that relate directly or indirectly to helping girls and young women in your county or community.

■ **Use local businesses to get your message out.** You can post your messages in lunchrooms, put them in company-sponsored newsletters, or place them on business-

related items, such as milk cartons, grocery bags, sides of buses, etc.

■ **Identify local reporters who have responsibilities in your area.** Establish a good relationship with these reporters so you can call on them when you need them.

■ **Identify someone to coordinate media activities.** This person needs to be seen as an objective information source.

■ **Conduct a forum on your issues for media representatives.** Invite representatives from local newspapers, television stations, and radio stations.

■ **Conduct a public opinion survey.** Find out who your supporters are and document community support. There are several agencies that might offer you help in getting started. They include public libraries; the extension service or urban studies department at state universities; volunteer bureaus in Portland and Eugene (see p. 10 for addresses and phone numbers); the Children's Services Division; the planning and evaluation section in the Department of Education; or the small-business development centers at community colleges.

■ **Set up a speaker's bureau.** Start small with a few people who are willing to make presentations about your issues. Give them the Action Kit (see p. 14). Recruit more speakers as time goes by or as demand requires. When you get calls from people who want to volunteer, ask whether they want to be part of the speaker's bureau. Have a plan for how you will orient new members.

■ **Identify buddies**. Share the media burden whenever possible with groups that are working on the same issues. You can collaborate on a newsletter, poster series, resource directory, or any number of similar projects. This will save time, effort, and money.

■ **Borrow good ideas.** Look around at what other social service groups are doing. If they have a good idea, use it. Don't be bashful. Just be sure to acknowledge their inspiration or help. And share your good ideas as well.

■ **Start a "swipe file."** If you publish a newsletter or periodic fact sheets, get permission from other newsletter editors in the state or across the country to use articles from their publications to supplement your local news. Reprint articles from the *Oregon Girls Advocate* (an OCCYSC publication).

■ **Use local cable television**. You could recognize youth who have overcome obstacles and are meeting life's challenges in positive ways, or the volunteers and programs that are helping youth do this.

■ **Write letters to editors.** This is a good way to raise awareness of current issues.

Despite difficulties, we do have choices, and I've preferred to treat obstacles as challenges.

—Elsa Gidlow

Willingness without action is fantasy.

—Anonymous

■ **Involve the media in a public education campaign**. The Lane County Youth Development Commission (341-4776) has formed a partnership with a local television station, a local business, and corporate sponsors to produce a series of 30-second vignettes on how parents can develop and increase their children's self-esteem.

■ **Follow-up on something that works.** Keep the momentum going. Let's say your community holds a series of forums dealing with at-risk girls. You could follow up by (1) calling together a smaller group afterwards to identify ideas for action, (2) writing a letter to the newspaper editor calling for action based on the forums, or (3) writing your legislator to involve him or her in the process. If the media publicize a program, you could invite them to revisit that program at a later date.

■ **Get on mailing lists.** Receive free materials that you can distribute in your community to raise awareness of issues important to you.

Some Things to Remember When You Present

1. Know your audience. This isn't as simple as it seems. You may know whether they are parents, youth, or businesspeople, but try as well to answer the following questions about your audience:

   - Are they aware of the issue?
   - Do they feel involved with it in some way?
   - Do they feel limited in what they can do about it?

   If your audience isn't aware of an issue, you will need to include more factual information. If your audience is minimally involved with an issue, they may not see the relevancy of your message to their lives, and they may not listen to you unless you are entertaining, brief and nontechnical. In contrast, audiences highly involved in an issue will listen to longer, less dramatic and more technical presentations.

   If most members of your audience don't feel in a position to do something about an issue, give them suggestions for how they can support those who do.

2. Use visual aids that enhance your presentation. If they aren't clear and easy to read, they will detract. Practice with the visuals so that everything flows well.

   Reserve use of visuals with technical information for audiences with high involvement in an issue. Always keep visuals simple.

3. Focus on the main point of your presentation and select details that support that point. Don't try to tell them "everything they ever wanted to know about...."

4. Devise a "hook"—an appropriate attention-grabber—to begin your presentation. But make sure it clearly relates to your main point.

5. Tell them what you're going to tell them; then tell them; and finally, tell them what you told them.

6. Don't say anything that you don't want to see in print or on the air.

7. Practice your speech aloud until it flows naturally. Use words you are comfortable with. It is rarely effective to read a speech.

8. Arrive early to check out the room in which you will speak and to get comfortable with it.

9. Always start on a strong, positive note. Engage your audience with an energetic, conversational style. Avoid being tentative. Always end on a positive and hopeful note.

10. Refrain from "arguing" with a participant during your presentation. Tell the person you would be glad to discuss his or her concerns after you are finished.

Remember: Your audience wants you to succeed.

Adapted from *Unauthorized Communication Handbook*, NWREL, 1991.

Some Things to Remember When Working with the Media

Decide whether the broadcast media is the best way to reach your intended audience. Use the media when you want to reach everyone, not just a specific group. Keep in mind that once you call the media, you give up control of your message. With this in mind, here are a few guidelines for working with the media:

1. Always put your news story in writing, especially if you initiate a telephone interview. Send a copy to your key audiences. That way no one is surprised by the news.
2. Before releasing information to the media, compare your situation with others, because a reporter probably will do this anyway. Again, you and your supporters won't have any unpleasant surprises.
3. Recognize the difference between "hard" news and "soft" news. Hard news—what makes headlines—often is unpleasant news. If you have hard news to share, try to make sure it is positive hard news (for example, the teen pregnancy rate in your county *dropped* by 10 percent).
4. Use the following ways to get your "soft" news (that is, a light feature or simple announcement) published:
   - Release news items in time to get them in either the Thursday or Sunday papers. These papers have more pages than usual because of increased advertising. Your item has a better chance of being published on these two days.
   - Get on a first-name basis with some newspaper, television and radio reporters. Your chances of being published will increase dramatically.
   - Hand deliver your release or story. If you show interest and commitment, so will the media.
   - If you receive some attention from the media, be sure to acknowledge them when you can.
   - Send notices of meetings to local newspapers. Such announcements open the meetings to the public and the press. Be prepared to be quoted.
   - If you prepare a public service announcement for local radio or television stations, try to include film or tape. Your chances of being broadcast will increase. Keep in mind that your message may be broadcast when most people are either asleep, at work or at school.
   - Watch for national news stories that tie in with your concerns. Then, call the local media and suggest they cover what local people are doing about the same issue.
   - If you have good "hard" news, do a press release with audio or film, if possible, or hold a press conference. Don't give "scoops." You may alienate potential press allies. Brief everyone at the same time. Remember to let key people know what you are doing.
5. Be prepared to handle bad news. Select a spokesperson to present your side of the story to the news media and then give a thorough explanation to your key audiences. The worst thing is to ignore bad news.
6. Determine whether your local news people recognize your issue. If they do, then flood them with information. If they don't, all the facts in the world won't help. You may have to do something dramatic to get their attention:
   - Bring your whole committee to the the newspaper building, radio or television station and request a meeting or interview
   - Organize a public event in front of the newspaper building, radio or television station
   - Have parents write letters to the media

   When you have their attention, make your presentation calmly. You will probably gain an ally.

Adapted from *Unauthorized Communication Handbook*, NWREL, 1991.

STRATEGY 5:

Building Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is an important issue for all girls. A recent study by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) states:

> Girls, aged eight and nine, are confident, assertive and feel authoritative about themselves. They emerge from adolescence with a poor self-image, constrained views of their future, and their place in society, and much less confident about themselves and their abilities.[4]

An Oregon Health Division survey of students in 13 high schools supports this view. It found that nearly half of Oregon's 11th-grade girls feel hopeless about the future.

During adolescence, girls are at risk for depression, eating disorders, substance abuse, dropping out, and early pregnancy. Girls who don't feel good about themselves and their futures are at the greatest risk. Anything we do to enhance girls' self-esteem also will help them overcome obstacles, realize their aspirations, and give them hope. Many efforts designed to help young women in trouble will be only temporary if we don't also build their self-esteem.

Healthy self-esteem helps ensure resiliency—the ability to persist and even thrive in spite of overwhelming odds—in children and young people. The resilient child, according to prevention research, is socially competent (responsive, flexible, empathetic and caring), has communication skills, and is able to laugh at herself and ridiculous situations. She can solve problems, is autonomous, and has a sense of purpose and future.[5]

Communities can support the building of healthy self-esteem by (1) providing care and support, (2) holding high expectations of their children, and (3) providing opportunities for their children to participate in the business of the community.

Communities can support the building of healthy self-esteem by (1) providing care and support; (2) holding high expectations; and (3) providing opportunities for children to participate in the business of the community.

[4] *Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America.* Washington, D.C.: American Association of University Women, 1991.

[5] *Fostering Resiliency in Kids: Protective Factors in the Family, School, and Community.* Bonnie Benard. Portland, Oregon: Western Regional Center, Drug-Free Schools and Communities, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1991. The conceptual framework for this section also derives from this report.

...tipping the scales from vulnerability to resilience may happen as a result of one person or one opportunity.

—Bonnie Benard

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Caring and Support

Make certain that children and youth have access to social networks within the community that promote and sustain individual and group solidarity.

■ **Assess your community's formal and informal social networks.** Check out the schools, community centers, churches, etc. What social groups (peer and intergenerational) are available to both girls and boys or solely to one gender or the other? Are there ample opportunities for girls to participate in these mixed groups and take leadership roles? See whether any gaps exist and how you or someone else might fill them.

■ **Provide positive interaction for girls who are socially isolated.** Studies show that social isolation often accompanies teenage parenthood and contributes to adverse circumstances for mother and child. Check with agencies providing services to girls and young women in your community to see whether they have clients who appear to be socially isolated; if so, plan ways to involve them with other people. For example, you could connect a volunteer with a girl who needs companionship or you could find a volunteer to participate with girls in a support group. The Mt. Hood Council of Camp Fire (656-2530) solicits "teen parent helpers" to care for young children while their teen mothers attend support groups or to provide refreshments for meetings.

■ **Build a collaborative network to provide all families access to needed resources.** Healthy human development requires access to health care, child care, housing, education, job training, employment, and recreational opportunities. Lack of access to these resources puts families and their children at the greatest risk for developing problem behaviors.

■ **Support and advocate for school-based health clinics.** Check with your local county health department to see how you can help establish or support a clinic in your area. Katie Howe of the Marion County Health Department (588-5355) also has information on what you can do.

■ **Link girls who need a "supportive friend" with volunteers.** The Girls' Emancipation Program at the YWCA in Portland (223-6281) used "community coaches." These were women who dedicated two hours per week to spend with a young woman. The woman was a friend, confidante, sympathetic shoulder, and positive role model, not an authority figure. The pairs went to the movies or out to dinner, took hikes, went shopping, or spent the day at the beach. The Santiam Girl Scout Council (581-2451) hosts several programs that link adults with at-risk teen girls who have been referred by school counselors or with girls in Salem's homeless shelter.

■ **Establish a mother/daughter or parent/daughter program.** The Mother/Daughter Choices program uses self-contained materials developed by Advocacy Press and Girls, Inc. Schools, counselors, and community service groups separately or cooperatively offer a six-week class to sixth-grade girls and their mothers. The AAUW has Choices groups in West Linn, Beaverton, and Portland. Resources for this program, in addition to your local AAUW group, include:

Advocacy Press
P.O. Box 236
Santa Barbara, California 93102-0236
(805)962-2728

June Tremain
Career and Technical Education
Portland Public Schools
280-5858

Consider conducting the program in conjunction with programs serving girls, the schools, or other community agencies.

■ **Provide ongoing community training.** Offer training to all residents that deals with communication skills, self-esteem building, coping with conflict, and dealing with peer pressure. Select a long-standing community agency to sponsor these activities, such as a local community college, the local health department, YWCA, or church. For example, the Lake County Mental Health Department (947-6021) provides ongoing girls' self-esteem/support groups.

■ **Sponsor a film series.** The state film library, local libraries, community colleges, or universities are good resources for films on issues affecting girls and young women.

■ **Open a teen center.** Teens need a place of their own where they can participate in educational and recreational activities. Such a center is being planned in the Eugene/Springfield area. For information, contact Karen Gaffney (341-4788).

■ **Start a hotline—one for young people and one for adults.** Callers could discuss their problems and find out where to get help. The Boys and Girls Aid Society of Oregon (222-9661) has a 24-hour hotline.

■ **Start a support group.** Pregnant, homeless, addicted, or abused girls will benefit from sharing experiences and offering each other hope. Also, consider support groups for incarcerated girls. Let them know they are not going to be abandoned. Contact your local juvenile justice services to see how you can start such a group. The OCCYSC (373-1283) coordinates approximately 25 Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs across the state that provide community volunteers as advocates for children in the court system.

■ **Form a group to landscape residential program facilities.** Plant grass, shrubs, and flowers. Clean up the facility. Show you care

A young trooper should have an old horse.

—Thomas Fuller

Even a small star shines in the darkness.

—Finnish proverb

by providing an upbeat environment for recovery.

High Expectations

Youth, especially female youth, need to know that they are valued in your community, that you see them as assets, not problems.

■ **Counteract media stereotypes of females.** Use public service announcements, news articles, meetings, or workshops. Ensure that girls and women are not judged solely on their appearances. Parents and physicians need to be more sensitive to behaviors resulting from poor body image which can lead to both physical and emotional problems for young women. The film "Killing Us Softly" does an excellent job of exploring how advertising exploits women's bodies.

■ **Conduct a career conference.** Use career conferences as a way to counteract occupational stereotypes for women. You may be familiar with the "Expanding Your Horizons" career conferences that are conducted throughout the nation and in Oregon. Girls attend a half-day to full-day conference where they meet women in nontraditional careers, especially those requiring mathematical or scientific training. Collaborate with another group (for example, the schools or your local AAUW) to conduct an "Expanding Your Horizons" conference in your area. For more information, contact: Math/Science Network, Preservation Park, 678 13th, Suite 100, Oakland, California 94612, (510) 893-6284. A local contact is Madeline Moore (287-8675).

■ **Conduct a public campaign to show girls they are valued.** Use both words and actions to get this message out. The activities presented in this idea book all give this message. However, you may want to do public service announcements or distribute buttons, pins, or posters that show that children are valued in your community.

■ **Conduct a forum on values and attitudes that enhance girls' self-esteem.** How might these values and attitudes be reinforced by the community? Also, how might certain adult behaviors, such as drug or alcohol abuse, contribute to the social problems of girls and young women?

■ **Create a youth community service award.** The Coos County Children and Youth Services Commission (269-1446) presents a "Youth Service Award" to youth between the ages of 12 and 18 who have (1) overcome adversity, (2) involved themselves in community issues, or (3) enhanced life in the community.

Opportunities for Participation

Self-esteem grows when children learn and successfully use new skills. Create opportunities for girls and young women to participate in the business of your community. Involvement not only builds self-esteem but also develops a sense of belonging and attach-

ment. Begin at an early age to direct girls' energy into socially and economically useful activities. Don't just ask them to attend; involve them in planning and carrying out activities. They can actually help with the fund-raising activities you're planning on their behalf.

■ **Start a formal "youth service corps."** Engage youth, especially girls, in providing needed services in your community (academic tutoring, literacy training, child care, elder care, tree planting, yard debris disposal, or highway clean up). A Youth Empowerment Initiative has been started by the Oregon Youth Development Alliance (236-9154) to model the benefits of youth and adults working together to improve their communities. Since 1987, the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps has provided youth with educational training and employment through projects that enhance state resources. Each year, its summer program serves approximately 400 youth, ages 16 to 19. At present, females are 25 percent of participants. Contact Becky Eklund at OCCYSC (373-1283) to find out how to obtain state support for conservation projects in your area.

■ **Create successes for youth.** With all programs, build in a component (arts and crafts, clean-up, building something, doing something for someone else) in which participants receive a feeling of accomplishment. As one person said, "It's amazing how making a simple craft puts smiles on their faces."

■ **Have successful young women share their stories.** Recruit girls who have overcome their problems to share their stories with others, both youth and adults. With their permission, put them on your volunteer list or in your resource directory.

Tell me and I'll forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I'll understand.

—Native American proverb

STRATEGY 6:

Tapping Potential Supporters

Many times we overlook groups that are willing to support our efforts. Are there some groups you have overlooked? Take a few minutes to sit down and identify all your potential supporters. Next, match the groups with tasks or projects you need help with. Then, start making phone calls. This will be time well-spent.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Men

Are men in the community involved in your efforts to help girls and young women? If they aren't, they can be. Here are some ideas about how you might reach out to men who are sympathetic to or aware of the problems girls and young women face. Don't overlook their support for your efforts. Make men feel welcome.

- **Devise a campaign to enlist men's efforts.** Go to the places where men work and play, either in person or with letters, phone calls or newsletters. Solicit their help. Design an information packet especially for male advocates. Use the Action Kit information as a beginning (see p. 14). Include specific ideas on how men can participate in your efforts.

- **Target men who are decisionmakers.** Ask them to endorse your efforts in providing programs and to help raise funds.

- **Hold a community forum on the issue of men advocating for girls and young women.** Talk to county commissions and local programs providing services. They may know someone to head this type of activity. Part of the purpose of the forum could be to educate men on the problems faced by many young women in their communities.

- **Find an outstanding community member and win him to your cause.** A local coach who is well-known in your community might be the ideal person. Include him in your publicity. Make him a visible advocate for your issues.

- **Recruit men for that speaker's bureau you're going to initiate.**

- **Recruit male advocates from the local community college or university**. Give your pitch to men of all ages. Have a specific project in mind. Ask for their help.

Take a few minutes to sit down and identify all your potential supporters.

All serious doing starts from within.

—Eudora Welty

■ **Reach out to fathers in your community.** Does the local high school or church have a dads' club? Find out how you might make a special appeal to fathers as a group. If no groups exist, start one!

■ **Design a pin that promotes men advocating for girls and young women.** The Oregon Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, Portland office (725-4181) has developed a pin with a portrait of a basketball player from the Portland Trail Blazer team.

Young People

What about young people? Are you trying to enlist their help? Here are some ideas for involving young people in the process.

■ **Design an information packet especially for youth advocates.** Use the Action Kit information as a start (see p. 14). Include ideas on how youth can participate in your efforts on behalf of girls and young women.

■ **Hold a teen conference.** Focus on the issues facing girls and young women.

■ **Hold a benefit concert for young people.** Enlist their help to raise money for programs needing funds.

■ **Make presentations to youth service groups.** Call the groups and ask to be put on their agendas. Have a specific project that you want help with and solicit their involvement.

■ **Contact the local high school's journalism or English teacher.** Perhaps some students would like to write articles for your newsletter. You lighten your load, and the students become more aware of the issues and solutions.

■ **Contact the speech teacher.** Recruit some students for a speaker's bureau. Have young people talk to groups of girls to increase their identification with the speaker and to provide positive youth role models.

■ **Contact the art teacher.** Students could do graphics and layout for your newsletter or resource directory. Students designed the cover for a Marion County resource directory.

■ **Contact the drama teacher.** A play could be used as an awareness activity or fundraiser.

■ **Work with school counselors.** They can help you start a prevention club or a support group in the schools.

■ **Contact leaders of local youth programs.** The Scouts, Campfire, or Future Farmers may be able to help you with a specific project.

■ **Contact local churches**. Find out what their youth groups are doing. Request help with a specific project.

Celebrities

Have you thought about asking a well-known person to endorse your efforts. Why not? We know "celebrities" are very busy, but many are more than happy to lend their name and support to programs serving young people. Always have a specific role or task in mind before contacting anyone.

■ **Contact professional athletic teams.** Maybe a player would be willing to do a brief spot as part of a public service announcement or attend a fund-raising event. Consider the spouses of celebrities, also. Many are involved in community work.

■ **Contact outstanding women.** Consider women in politics, business, entertainment, sports, the arts, broadcast news, or in other areas who can endorse your programs or make a speech at an event you sponsor (such as a "Women of the Year" awards dinner). These women have had to fight against the odds to get where they are, and most are more than willing to do presentations. For example, invite Tanya Harding, the Olympic figure skater from Vancouver, Washington, or Stacy Allison of Portland, Oregon, the first American woman to reach the top of Mt. Everest, to participate in an awards dinner or other event. The Salem YWCA (581-9922) hosts an annual "Tribute to Outstanding Women" event which gives media attention to women in the community who have made a difference.

Service Organizations

Many service organizations are looking for worthwhile projects they can help support.

■ **Bring your message to local service organizations.** Arrange presentations to their members. Keep them aware of the issues for girls and young women in your community.

■ **Contact these service organizations when you have specific needs.** Persuade them to adopt your project as their service project.

The nice thing about team work is that you always have people on your side.

—Margaret Carty

STRATEGY 7:

Raising Funds[6]

Fund raising is an everlasting issue. Limited resources will undoubtedly prevent you from accomplishing all that you want. Nonetheless, a variety of ways to solicit funds is available. You can use grant writing, telephone calls, letter writing, public service announcements, and special fund-raising events to approach:

- Foundations—community, independent, or corporate
- Corporations and businesses
- Religious organizations
- Individuals

Unfortunately, you may have to spend some money to get some money! A good public relations campaign (see Strategy 4) needs to precede your fund-raising activities. People need to know who you are and what you're doing before they will support you financially. As with other activities, collaborate with partners to share the load and profits of fund raising.

[6]Many of the ideas in this section come from *Creative Sources of Funding for Programs for Homeless Families*. Dorothy Siemon. Washington, DC: Georgetown University, March 1990.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Contacting Foundations

■ **Find out about the foundations in your state or area.** Then identify a local foundation that likes what you do. The Multnomah County Library has a collection on foundations. One helpful resource is the *Foundation Directory*, Stan Olson, editor. New York: The Foundation Center.

This directory lists foundations by state and subject area. It also publishes a supplement called *A Guide to Grant Programs $25,000–$100,000.*

If you are trying to get substantial funding for a program by writing a proposal for a grant, keep the following in mind:

- Document everything you are currently doing. This information may come in handy when you begin to write a proposal for funding. Be ready when an opportunity presents itself.
- Build on an already-existing program or activity. Propose a way to enhance it and make it even more effective. Foundations will also fund new and innovative programs if you have a well thought-out plan that clearly outlines the expected benefits to girls and the community.
- Obtain letters of support for your

As with other activities, collaborate with partners to share the load and profits of fund raising.

When love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece.

—John Ruskin

programs and activities to enclose with your proposal.

- Include inkind donations (for example, equipment donated from a local company or volunteer hours) in your proposal's budget.
- Stay in contact with the foundation after you've submitted the proposal. People read proposals. Keep your project in the foundation's mind by personal contact, such as a telephone call or visit.
- Make your proposal readable. Write concisely and without jargon.

Contacting Corporations and Businesses or Religious Organizations

■ **Contact the community relations department of large companies.** Arrange a meeting with the director and find out what the company is interested in funding. Tailor your approach to the company's interests.

■ **Approach a local CEO.** It will probably be tough to get an appointment for a face-to-face meeting, but be persistent. This person may become your greatest ally. Present the problem in a way that will capture the imagination and passion of the CEO. Be clear and specific in your plans and goals. Emphasize the number of girls who will benefit from your request.

■ **Encourage local corporations to match employee donations to your projects.** Be sure to publicly recognize their contributions. The Morrow County Children and Youth Services Commission (276-1926) established a $3,000 "challenge pot" and urged local businesses, farmers, clubs, and concerned individuals to match the amount two to one to support a child development center.

■ **Suggest that local companies donate a percentage of their profits to your program.** Be sure to publicly recognize their contributions.

■ **Solicit inkind contributions from local companies.** Be sure to publicly recognize their contributions.

■ **Contact outreach programs at your local churches.** Find out their priorities and whether they match any of yours. They may also have a volunteer pool that you can tap.

Contacting Individuals

■ **Use direct mail.** Start a list of potential donors. Be sure to personalize your letter and include a self-addressed, stamped return envelope if you are hoping for a reply to your request for money.

Request materials on direct mail campaigns from The Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10003-3050, (800) 424-9836. Your local library will also have

materials. A good resource to describe what to do and what to avoid is: *Fund Raising in the Public Interest.* David Grubby and David Zwick. Washington, D.C.: Public Citizen, 1977.

If you don't have staff to do a direct mailing or the funds to hire a consultant, consider using other community organizations to help you distribute your fund-raising letter.

■ **Go door to door.** Make sure your representatives present a competent and professional image. Check out any state or local laws that apply to canvassing. *Fund Raising in the Public Interest* is a useful resource here.

■ **Consider conducting special events.** They can raise money, publicize your goals or project, and be fun. One drawback, however, is that they require a lot of work and time. Be sure you appoint an overall coordinator and event committee, publicize the event vigorously, and seek financial backers, if you need them.

If you have no funds, find another group to sponsor the event on your behalf (for example, senior citizen groups, professional associations, Rotary, Kiwanis, grange associations, or student groups). Some ideas for special events are:

- *Walk-a-thon, bike-a-thon, swim-a-thon, bowl-a-thon, dance-a-thon.* Be careful here. You can end up spending more money than you make. Investigate organizations that have sponsored such events and learn from their experiences. Know what kind of commitment you have to make. This kind of activity also requires follow-up, such as making awards and collecting pledges. Again, *Fund Raising in the Public Interest* is a helpful resource.
- *Celebrity athletic event.* Which sports are popular in your community: Basketball? Soccer? Softball? Volleyball? Sponsor a game between local community members and celebrity athletes.
- *Celebrity non-athletic event.* How about a chess, bridge, Scrabble, or cribbage tournament involving a celebrity?
- *Sweet tooth sale.* Try something different from the traditional bake sale if you want. How about a chocolate theme? Or a cheesecake theme? Or whatever is the rage in your community.
- *No-bake sale.* Have people determine how much the ingredients cost for their favorite recipes. Then they write checks for the cost of the ingredients and mail the recipes and donations to you. You can compile the recipes into a simple booklet to sell.
- *People-of-the-Year Awards.* Solicit nominations for outstanding people in categories you select. Sell tickets to an awards banquet. Not only do you make money, but you also receive a lot of publicity.
- *Cash Crop.* Find a farmer who will donate some land and recruit a local group to plant and tend a crop. Sell the crop and pocket the profits.

If one is lucky, a solitary fantasy can totally transform one million realities.

—Maya Angelou

We couldn't possibly know where it would lead, but we knew it had to be done.

—Betty Friedan

- *Famous Fashions.* Have local elected officials, outstanding community members, and local media personalities model clothing provided by local merchants.
- *Pig for a day.* Let your imagination roam. Don't be afraid to do an event as long as it meets the "acceptable to your community" standard. For example, a shelter for battered women in Oklahoma ran a "pig for a day" event. Volunteers called people on the shelter's mailing list to inform them they had won a pig for a day. If they pledged money to the program, they avoided a pig houseguest. If they didn't, they babysat a pig for a day. Be sure you know a pig supplier!
- *Other ideas:* Sponsor a tea, luncheon, costume party, haunted house, antique sale, auction, raffle, boat race, dinner, charity ball, carnival, picnic, breakfast, bed and breakfast tour, carriage or hay ride, concert, bazaar, rummage sale, car, horse, or tractor races, car wash, golf or tennis tournament, T-shirt or sweatshirt with your logo and so forth.

■ **Design an advocacy pin.** Get a celebrity to sponsor your pin or design a pin to give away when you receive a contribution.

Marketing Tips

No matter the size of the activity or program you decide to conduct, you will need a sound "marketing plan" to ensure success. For long-term survival, how you promote your program is just about as important as its content. Below are 9 principles[7] that we hope will help:

■ **Personalize your program.** Convince your supporters and volunteers why the program or activity you are proposing is exactly what your community needs. Don't present a program or activity as an import; emphasize its homegrown features.

■ **Do your homework.** Before you start, find out if others have blazed a similar trail and learn from their experiences. Invite them to participate in your activity.

■ **Go calling.** Include one-on-one contact as part of your marketing plan. Announcements and meetings are helpful, but face-to-face encounters generate more enthusiasm and commitment.

■ **Know your enemies.** Before you go public with your plans, talk to anyone who might oppose you and try to win her or him over. If they aren't converted to your cause, at least they will be less likely to react publicly in a negative way.

■ **Start anywhere.** Don't make the mistake of thinking you have to begin at the top. Start small and build a program. Concentrate on getting a few people involved and work from there.

■ **Share the responsibility.** Try not to overload any one person with too many tasks. Even if you start small, be sure to have enough people to do the job without burdening them with excessive time or money commitments.

■ **Be visible.** Know the "politics" of your community and use them to your advantage. Conduct your business in public, and be in contact with the leaders in the community who can help you.

■ **Never take NO as final.** Persevere, but also keep your options open. You never know when the time will be ripe, and you will want to be ready. This means that you do not want to do anything out of annoyance or frustra-

How you promote your program is just about as important as its content.

[7]These principles are presented in "MK101: How to Market Your Experiential Education Program." Edward Zlotkowski. *Experiential Education*, Vol. 17, No. 2, March/April 1992. Edward Zlotkowski is director of the Service-Learning Project, Bentley College, Waltham, Massachusetts and a member of the English Department.

The biggest human temptation is to settle for too little.

—Thomas Merton

tion that could hamper your efforts further down the line.

■ **Recognize every effort.** Never overlook an opportunity to give credit where credit is due. Nothing builds or maintains participation more than recognition of a job well-done.

Good luck in your organizing efforts!

Persistence

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence...

Talent will not;
Nothing is more common than
unsuccessful men and women
with talent...

Genius will not;
Unrewarded genius is
almost a proverb...

Education will not;
The world is full
of educated derelicts...

Persistence and determination
Alone are omnipotent...

The slogan "Press on" has solved
and always will solve,
the problems of the human race.

—*Anonymous*

Reprinted with permission of *Emergency Librarian*, 12:5, May/June 1985.